

REMARKS

In an Office Action dated November 10, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-12, and 14-22 (the only remaining claims) under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,125,275 (Comer) in view of U.S. Patent 5,719,564 (Sears) and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,699,407 (Nguyen). Applicants respectfully disagree with the grounds for the Examiner's rejection as applied to the claims as amended.

The primary issue in this rejection is that of having a system which allows a single directory number to be used for accessing a selected one of a plurality (and sometimes a very large plurality, e.g., claims 4 and 15) of wireless cellular devices from a server system.

Nguyen teaches an arrangement for providing extension phone service in a cellular environment wherein the "extensions" need not be in the same geographic location as the primary terminating wireless phone. In a way similar to the arrangements for the well-known service called "flexible alerting", all the extensions are alerted and the call is completed to the extension which answers first. Thus, the originator of the call does not select the particular extension to which that individual wishes to be connected. This is in contrast to Applicants' arrangement wherein the calling party, i.e., the server, must select the particular cellular device to which it is to be connected since only that cellular device is connected to the meter to be read or the device to be controlled.

Speaking more generally, this type of arrangement differs from conventional cellular connections wherein the called party's directory number is supplied by the caller and the system finds the mobile identification number for accessing the station associated with that directory number. In the case of Nguyen, the system finds a plurality of mobile identification numbers corresponding to the mobile identification numbers of the various extensions but, as noted above, the caller does not specify which of these extensions is to be connected. However, in accordance with Applicants' teachings, only the selected wireless cellular device is alerted in contrast to the arrangement of Nguyen. In order to adapt the teachings of Nguyen to the type of system required in Applicants' invention, i.e., one in which even though a plurality of cellular devices is associated with one telephone (directory) number, arrangements would have to be added so that the calling

party specifies additional information such that only a selected wireless cellular device is connected.

In the rejection of claims 1 and 12, the Examiner stated:

At the time of Applicants' invention it would have been obvious to modify Comer to explicitly include the use of a server for manipulating the wireless devices as done by Sears and to include a method for implementing an extension phone mechanism for cellular systems as done by Nguyen to provide centralized control and setup of the utility meter reading system.

As noted above, the "extension phone mechanism" of Nguyen would not accomplish the goal of Applicants' invention as stated in the preamble (and further amplified in the amendment to claims 1 and 12 being submitted herein) i.e., the goal of establishing a connection between a server system and a selected wireless device. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of claims 1 and 12 should be held allowable over the cited prior art. Claims 3-11 and 14-22 should then be held allowable as being dependent from an allowable independent claim.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the grounds for rejection of the claims as amended, allow claims 1, 3-12, and 14-22 as amended, and pass the application to issue.

If the Examiner feels that a voice or fax communication would help to advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call or fax Applicants' attorney at 630 469-3575.

Respectfully submitted

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